

**International Think Tank on Presenting Gambling Populations and  
 First Contact Services**

*Newsletter Number 2: December 2004*

**ADVANCE NOTICE**

2<sup>ND</sup> Meeting of the *International Think Tank on  
 Presenting Populations and First Contact Services*  
 and  
*International Gambling Conference*

25 - 27 May 2005\*

Auckland, New Zealand

\*Provisional date

Welcome to the second Think Tank newsletter. This edition includes a brief update of the Treatment and Services subgroup meeting held on 10 November 2004, Surfers Paradise, Queensland, Australia. The meeting was held immediately prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> annual NAGS conference.

**Acknowledgement**

The venue for the Think Tank subgroup meeting and all conference facilities were kindly organised and funded by the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation, Queensland Government Treasury.

**Participants**

Present at the meeting were representatives from New Zealand, Australia and the USA.

<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>USA</b>
Max Abbott	Leigh Barrett	James Westphal
Maria Bellringer	Andrea Brebner	
Gary Clifford	Angus Forbes	
Clare Docherty	Bill Horman	
Debbie Edwards	Jan McMillen	
Ralph Gerdelan	Leonie Middleton	
Sean Sullivan	Jane Oakes	
Philip Townshend	Eric Tyssen	
	Susan Munro	

## Content

Following a welcome given by Max Abbott and Gary Clifford and a recap of the Auckland 2004 Think Tank meeting, the day progressed with presentations followed by discussions around the presentations and related issues.

The presentations were:

Title	Presenter/s
A treatment package using targeted information, in vivo desensitisation and biofeedback systems for gamblers	Philip Townshend
Should a clinical trials network for gambling treatments be developed?	James Westphal and Jane Oakes
Helpline assessment/integrated care/audiovisual support	Gary Clifford
The ClubCare NZ example	Gary Clifford and Ralph Gerdelan

The PowerPoint presentation given by James Westphal and Jane Oakes is available for those who are interested. Please Email Maria Bellringer ([maria.bellringer@aut.ac.nz](mailto:maria.bellringer@aut.ac.nz)) if you would like a copy.

## Key points

The key discussion points focused around:

- ❖ Treatments and the components of treatment
- ❖ What could be gained by the formation of a network with international collaborations
- ❖ A single site randomised controlled trial (clinical treatment programme) is scheduled to take place in Queensland (in collaboration with Turning Point) over a three year period
- ❖ Merits of setting up a multi-site clinical trials network
- ❖ Interface with industry is important

## Key actions

- 1) *Consider the different therapies that may be ready (or could soon be ready) to join a multi-site clinical trials network*

This process will need a discussion document to get things moving and which can be reported upon at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Think Tank meeting in May 2005. Specific proposals for a multi-site clinical trials network should be invited before May and the relevant governments who are likely to fund the work should be involved.

***Please advise if you would like to help with this initiative including development of the discussion document.***

- 2) *Data collection systems*

It is important to be able to make comparisons across jurisdictions regarding data collected from problem gamblers. Treatment providers (including helplines) often collect information for their own purposes. A decision needs to be made regarding what data should be collected to enable cross-jurisdictional comparisons. New Zealand has a data set, as does Victoria.

General population surveys do not have a large enough sample of problem gamblers to enable statistically valid mining for information. Should common screens and measures (e.g. across

comorbidities) be used across jurisdictions? This would enable large enough samples for drilling down for further information.

*Please advise if you would like to help with this initiative.*

### 3) Use of helpline data

Helpline data could be used to look for patterns, and changes in patterns, in problem gambling behaviour. The problem is that different helplines collect different client data and the quality of data collected is varied.

The helpline network website will be live soon. Please contact Gary Clifford for more details [gary.clifford@gamblingproblem.co.nz](mailto:gary.clifford@gamblingproblem.co.nz)

*Please advise if you would like to help with this initiative.*

#### **REQUEST:**

*A budget will be required for the three action points detailed - this will need to be disseminated to the policy makers and governments so they can build the work into their funding strategies. Please advise if you would like to help with this initiative.*

### **Think Tank subgroups**

- ❖ Treatment and Services Subgroup
  - Please inform Maria Bellringer if you would like to be involved in one or more of the three action areas detailed.
- ❖ Research Subgroup
  - Max Abbott and Masood Zangeneh are taking a lead with this subgroup. Further information will be disseminated as and when available.
- ❖ Policy and Public Health Subgroup
  - A leader/s is required for this subgroup.

If you would like to contribute to the leadership of a subgroup/action area please inform Maria Bellringer in the first instance.

An updated table of subgroup members is detailed in Appendix 1. Please inform Maria Bellringer if you would like to be added or removed from any of these lists. Also, please advise if there are other people who you believe could make a constructive contribution to the Think Tank and one or more of its subgroups.

### **Las Vegas meeting**

At the beginning of December, Max Abbott and other Think Tank participants including Jeff Derevensky, Adrian Scarfe, James Westphal and Rachel Volberg (apologies if we have forgotten anyone) attended a meeting in Las Vegas. The main focus of the meeting was the issues surrounding definition and measurement of problem gambling; also visited was the design of a national UK prospective study of gambling and problem gambling.

## **Review of Research on Aspects of Problem Gambling**

For a majority of 2004, Max Abbott, Rachel Volberg and Maria Bellringer, together with Gerda Reith from the University of Glasgow were involved in conducting a review of research on aspects of problem gambling for the Responsibility in Gambling Trust, United Kingdom. The full report and a much shorter summary version are both available on the Responsibility in Gambling Trust's website at <http://www.rigt.org.uk/research.asp>

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### **Think Tank meeting and Conference May 2005**

The second Think Tank meeting follows on from and builds upon the successful first *International Think Tank on Presenting Gambling Populations and First Contact Services* which was held in Auckland, New Zealand in May 2004. At the first Think Tank meeting, participants agreed that the second meeting would be held 12 months later (i.e. May 2005) in Auckland.

The purpose of this Think Tank is to address globally significant issues and developments in problem gambling policy, services and research in relation to presenting gambling populations and first contact services. The ultimate aim is to contribute to the development of an international public health agenda on gambling.

All three working domains agreed at the first Think Tank meeting will be featured. These are:

- ❖ Research
- ❖ Treatment and Services
- ❖ Policy and Public Health

A focus will be to further mobilise each of the three domains by identifying and documenting key issues, deciding on research and project priorities and coordinating an internationally collaborative plan of action.

The Think Tank will take place on 25 and 26 May 2005\* and will be followed by a one day international gambling conference on 27 May 2005\*. Post-conference workshops will be held on 28 May 2005\*.

For further information and/or if you would like to be involved in the May 2005 Think Tank meeting, please contact Maria Bellringer.

### **And Finally.....**

Max Abbott, Gary Clifford and Maria Bellringer wish you all the season's greetings and very best wishes for the New Year.....

.....and we look forward to seeing some of you again in May 2005.

---

\* Provisional date

## APPENDIX 1

### Think Tank Working Groups: Interested Participants

<b>Research</b>		
<b>Leaders: Max Abbott and Masood Zangeneh</b>		
Phillida Bunkle	Tony Carr	Vivian Cheung
Andrew Duncan	Debbie Edwards	Sitaleki Finau
Linda Hancock	Nerilee Hing	Nemu Lallu
John Lepper	Charles Livingstone	John Markland
Jan McMillen	Tracy Schrans	Sean Sullivan
Richard Tan	Rachel Volberg	Masood Zangeneh

<b>Treatment/Services</b>		
Patrick Au	Leigh Barrett	Andrea Brebner
Vincent Burke	Vivian Cheung	Andrew Duncan
Debbie Edwards	Krista Ferguson	Angus Forbes
Linda Hancock	John Hannifin	Bill Horman
Lynette Hutson	Pefi Kingi	Nemu Lallu
John Lepper	John Markland	Jan McMillen
Leonie Middleton	Jane Oakes	Cynthia Orme
Campbell Roberts	Adrian Scarfe	Sean Sullivan
Richard Tan	Phil Townshend	Eric Tyssen
Barbara van der Spuy	Jim Westphal	

<b>Policy and Public Health</b>		
Phillida Bunkle	Vincent Burke	Vivian Cheung
Lorna Dyll	Debbie Edwards	Krista Ferguson
Sitaleki Finau	Ralph Gerdelan	Linda Hancock
John Hannifin	Nerilee Hing	Carolyn Hobson
Nemu Lallu	Paul Lavulo	John Lepper
Dave Macpherson	John Markland	Jan McMillen
Graeme Minchin	Richard Northey	Roger Parton
John Raeburn	Campbell Roberts	Tracy Schrans
John Stansfield	Elizabeth Stevenson	Richard Tan
Rachel Volberg	John Wong	Nick Xenophon